(c) what are the steps taken by Government to improve the Indian tonnage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) The share of Indian and Foreign Shipping lines in the total volume of India's overseas trade for 1991-92 was 35.9% and 64.1%, respectively.

(b) The share of Indian tonnage in the total world tonnage in terms of GRT is about 1.41 per cent.

(c) The Government have taken the following steps to improve the Indian tonnage:

1. Automatic approval is now given for:—

(i) Acquisition of all categories of ships except crude tankers and OSVs, by Private Shipowning Companies.

(ii) Sale of ships for further trading/scrapping to a company within India or abroad.

(iii) Acquisition of ship from an Indian Shipyard; and

(iv) Acquisition for replacement tonnage.

2. Shipping companies have been allowed to retain sale proceeds of their ships abroad and utilise them for fresh acquistion.

3. Shipping companies have been given freedom to time charter out Indian ships to foreign shipping companies.

4. Shipping companies are allowed to acquire vessels through bare boat charter-cum-demise method.

5. Quarterly Block Allocation Scheme for repair of ships has been dispensed with entirely and Reserve Bank of India now releases foreign exchange for ship repair dry docking and spares for imported capital goods without any value limit.

6. Freight charges on account of movement of fertilizer and petroleum products are now allowed to be paid in convertible currency on par with other commodities.

7. With a view to attracting foreign capital for acquisition of ships, Government have relaxed the minimum percentage of share capital of an Indian company to be held by citizens of India, from 60% to 49% as per Section 21(ii)(b) of Merchant Shipping Act 1958.

Wages of Port Workers

4148. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of major ports and workers employed in these ports;

(b) what has been the growth in the volume of traffic vis-a-vis work force during 1980 and 1990;

(c) what has been the growth in the real wages of port workers during 1980—90; and

(d) efforts made by Government to safeguard the real wages of the port workers from erosion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) There are eleven major ports and about 1.13 lakhs Class III & IV employees/workers were employed by the major Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards as on 31-12-1992.

(b) Total traffic handled at the major ports in the years 1980-81 and 1990-91 and number of employees/workers under the major Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards as on 31st December, 1980 and 1990 are as given below:—

Total traffic handled	Total number of employees/workers
1980-81 80.27 million tonnes.	31-12-1980 — 1.43 Lakhs
1990-91 152.86 million tonnes.	31-12-1990 — 1.23 Lakhs

(c) Wage (Pay and Dearness Allowance) at the minimum of the lowest pay scale of a port worker is as under:—

1980 (December) — Rs. 618 per month
1990 (December) — Rs. 1726 per month

(d) Wages of port workers have been revised periodically.

New Scheme for Road Developments in Priority List

4149. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SURFECE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the Eighth Plan about 20